

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The claims are 9-12.

Claims 9-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Akiya et al. (U.S. 4,758,461).

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The rejection states that Akiya (U.S. 4,758,461) discloses the recording paper comprising mercerized pulp (emphasis) such as LBKP and NBKP (column 3, lines 58-61) which are hardwood bleached kraft pulp and softwood bleached kraft pulp, respectively.

It is correct to state that LBKP means hardwood bleached kraft pulp, and NBKP means softwood bleached kraft pulp. However, it is not correct to state that LBKP and NBKP are mercerized pulps. It should be noted that "mercerized pulp" refers to a special pulp prepared by immersing pulp obtained by a usual bleaching method such as a kraft pulping or sulfite pulping method (such as LBKP and NBKP) in a strong alkali solution and then thoroughly washing the same with water for removing residual alkali (see page 3, line 21 from bottom to page 4, line 16 of the present specification). Thus, the description of column 3, lines 58-61 of Akiya, relied on by the rejection, does not teach or suggest the use of "mercerized pulp" in Akiya's recording paper or the advantages thereof.

Additionally, in Akiya's recording paper, excellent ink absorptivity is accomplished by controlling a Stöckigt sizing degree in the range of 0 to 15 sec. and enhanced coloring density is obtained by using a silicon containing pigment. See column 2, lines 31 to 50.

In contrast, in the ink jet recording paper of the present invention, it is essential to use "mercerized pulp" in order to improve ink absorptivity and coloring density. Therefore, an art-skilled person would not arrive at the ink jet recording paper of the present invention from Akiya in which the use of mercerized pulp is neither disclosed nor suggested.

Also in the present Official Action, it is stated, as in the previous Official Actions, that the determination of the liquid transfer length by Bristow's method is a product by process limitation.

In fact, it is a parameter defining the properties of the claimed ink jet recording paper and has nothing to do with a process for making the paper.

In this regard, see the enclosed copy of ASTM D5455-93 (1998) Standard Test Method for Short-Term Liquid Sorption Into Paper (Bristow's Test) which corresponds to J.Tappi No. 51-87, recited in the present claims as a means to determine liquid transfer length.

From this publication, it is apparent that the term in issue is not a process parameter, but rather a property of the product being tested.

In any event, the liquid transfer length is an essential feature of the present invention and is neither disclosed nor suggested by Akiya.

On page 2 of the Official Action, second line from the bottom, reference is made to the Suenaga reference of record. However, Suenaga has not been applied in the present rejection. Perhaps reference to Akiya rather than Suenaga is intended.

In sum, the use of mercerized pulp is essential to obtain an ink-jet recording paper having the recited properties and this feature is neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited reference.

No further issues remaining, allowance of this application is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner has any comments or proposals for expediting prosecution, please contact undersigned at the telephone number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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